



THE MONITOR

NEWSLETTER OF THE HOOSIER HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY

A non-profit organization dedicated to the education of its membership and the conservation of all amphibians and reptiles

Volume 26 Number 6

June 2015

June HHS meeting
June 17th 7:00 p.m.
Holliday Park, Auditorium
Topic: Annual "Show and Tell" Program
Speakers: HHS Members

June's meeting will be our popular "Show and Tell" program. HHS members are invited to show their favorite one or two "herps" and briefly tell about the animal and explain how they care for them. It is always fun to see what our fellow members are keeping and you might get an idea of another reptile or amphibian you would like to add to your collection.

President's message

Jim Horton

Had a great meeting experience last month meeting new members. We had a room full of members and guests. I hope everyone enjoyed the meeting with Dan Doreson and his wife, Judy.

If anyone is interested in presenting an animal for a Herp of the Month, please contact me. We'd love to see what you have, its biology and your husbandry techniques.

The 15th Annual Herpout was a blast! We found a large number of species and the weather couldn't have been better. I'd like to thank everyone who spent the day with us at Hardin Ridge. Read my review of the event in more detail in this issue.

Last month I met Dale Shoentrup and his wife Lori at the Zion Nature Center. We were invited to help celebrate World Turtle Day along with the staff and visitors. Thanks to Dale and Lori for bringing a large variety of chelonians for this hands-on display. Dale's Sulcata tortoise was a big hit with everyone. This month is our annual Show and Tell meeting. Bring anything that you would like to show that is herp related – anything. See you there!

Welcome New Members/Welcome Back Renewals

Renewals

Anita & Paul carter Carl Mc Dougall Courtney & Jeremy McIntire

New Members

Heather White Matthew Most Nancy Tatum Deborah Rafacz

Hoosier Herpout 2015 (review)

Jim Horton

Good weather and a great team of field herpers made for a successful Hoosier Herpout. Clouds kept the temperatures from getting too hot on Saturday. That brought out the herps! Eastern box turtles were abundant in the woodlands. We counted 12 for the day. Some were shy and stayed closed up in their shell while others were eager to move on (and not stopping for pics). All of the box turtles found were a mix of adult male and female.

Unfortunately I completely forgot to get a group shot of everyone this year. We had a decent turnout nonetheless. We also ran out of time for our newest event – a water balloon toss.



Eastern box turtle

Our first larger snake of the day was an eastern hog nose. This was an all black specimen and it went through all the actions to get us to leave. Playing dead was its last resort. After witnessing this death feign with our cameras, we put it back where we found it.

Eastern milk snakes weren't scarce either. We found about 6 of them in many color patterns and hues from brown to brick red. Ringneck snake numbers are usually good and we found a dozen or more of them.

Northern copperheads were a hit for HHS members who had not seen one in the wild. We yielded 5 of them. The camera shutters were clicking heavily while these pit vipers were uncovered.

An eastern garter was spotted by our group but quickly left the scene. Fowler's and American toads were the most amphibians reported for the day. We lost count after several dozen at our footsteps.

Another amphibian was among the highlights of the day. A spotted salamander was found under a large piece of flat board. This youngster measured only three inches long.



Spotted salamander

A drive into the Hoosier National Forest brought us to a familiar spot that is good for milk snakes. After exiting our cars, a large turkey flew up from the ground and we soon realized it was a female on a nest. We quickly took some photos of the nest and eggs and left it alone.

The vegetation was high and ticks were everywhere. We sprayed repellent but they didn't stop. Some members were wearing shorts and I'm sure that wasn't fun for them. Irritating thorns, stinging nettles, and biting insects were all part of getting to the good spots.

Thanks to Roger Carter for cooking up some great burgers and dogs. Our free raffle giveaway was drawn just after lunch. Most everyone was able to get a little something.

Of the lizard species, five-lined skinks were the most numerous followed by a few northern fence lizards. A nice mix of adult and the beautiful young five-lines kept things interesting. We had fun trying to get them to sit still for photos. Catching them was even more difficult. Fence lizards were found near the Monroe Reservoir shoreline. Dry, weathered dead tree remains allowed the perfect habitat for fence lizards. They are a favorite to find along the lake areas. We saw a few females and male with bright blue coloration on its undersides. These colors mark the breeding season for this species.



Eastern Hognose – death feign

Worm snakes are a favorite for many herpers. These shiny little gems are fond of moist dark habitat. We lifted a few pieces of fallen bark and

found a few of them. Another small snake that was found under a small piece of rusted tin was a red belly snake. They can be found in a variety of grey, tan, and bronze colorations. This one was dark brown. It had appeared to be gravid as well. After carefully handling for photos, we put her back under the tin fragment.



Red belly snake

My presentation of *Reptiles and Amphibians of the Hardin Ridge and Surrounding Areas* brought the campers in to learn more about the fascinating world of herps. Any talk with the word “reptiles” in it is usually popular with the public. We do this talk every year in the amphitheater at dusk.

Cope's gray treefrogs could be heard throughout the day trilling high in the trees. Rainfall from the night before kept the woodlands humid and tree frogs love these conditions. We didn't hear any grays that day.

After a night of good conversation at the camp fire, Rick Marrs and Neil Jones jammed on their guitars. Soon after that we hiked to some of the bathroom facilities for our usual insect/arachnid hunt. A large variety of creepy crawlers make their way to the lights at these facilities. Luna and promethea moths were among the best finds of the night.

The next morning, Neil and I decided to hike a bit more. We had collected a few snakes for the presentation at the amphitheater on Saturday evening. All of the snakes were released at their exact point of capture.



Rough green snake

We flipped more tin and found a few more skinks and worm snakes. A short hike and a search at one of my favorite spots yielded a rough green snake! This little snake demonstrated its defensive side by glaring at us with its mouth agape. We released it into the green vines where it quickly disappeared in camouflage. Neil had not seen one in the wild and he was thrilled.

Another Herpout in the books!



A letter from Purdue University responding to our donation assisting in the funding of hellbender research headed by Dr. Rob Williams.

We deeply appreciate your generous support of the people and programs of Purdue University. Thank you for your gift to Purdue Agriculture. Your generosity will help maintain our reputation as a source of highly qualified graduates and our global agriculture leadership.

Jay T. Akridge
Glenn W. Sample Dean of Agriculture

www.hoosierherpsoc.org

OliveBranchVet.com
OliveBranchVet@gmail.com

Olive Branch Parke
VETERINARY CLINIC

Dr. Anndrea Hatcher
1480 Olive Branch Parke Ln, Ste 600
Greenwood, IN 46143

317-887-VETS (8387) Find Us on Facebook



AVIAN & EXOTIC ANIMAL CLINIC, INC.
Angela M. Lennox, D.V.M.
Diplomate, American Board of Veterinary Practitioners
Certified in Avian Practice
Association of Avian Veterinarians
Association of Exotic Mammal Veterinarians

9330 Waldemar Road
Indianapolis, IN 46268
(317) 879-8633
www.exoticvetclinic.com

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW YOUR INDIANA LIZARDS? PART 2

By Jim Horton (photos-Jim Horton)

This the second part of a series featuring the lizards that inhabit the many regions of our state.

The northern regions of the U. S. aren't exactly known for a large variety of lizard species. Here in Indiana, we're lucky to have 6 different lizards. Our long, vertical shaped state features many natural habitats, waterways, and terrain.

Southern Indiana is home to a heat loving, grayish colored lizard known as the fence lizard. **Northern fence lizards** (*Sceloporus undulatus*) are somewhat arboreal and their often seen on large rocks or dead trees.

Fence lizards are in the spiny lizard family. Rough, spiny scales surround this lizard for protection. This species will display head bobbing as a form of communication. Adults and young are similar in appearance. During mating season, adult males will display brilliant hues of blue around the belly and neck to attract females.



These little guys are fun to watch after they've been startled. They'll almost play peek-a-boo with you around the back side of a tree. Rock outcrops, boulders, dead trees, and stumps are favored by fence lizards.



Predominately found in the northwestern section of the Hoosier state. Another population is found around the Vincennes area in the sandy areas of Indiana southwest. Minton (2001) States that both populations of *Cnemidophorus* may occur in our state, *Cnemidophorus s. sexlineatus* in the south and *Cnemidophorus s. viridis* in the north. These are arguably the fastest lizard (as the name implies) in our state. This is a sun loving lizard that quickly takes cover at the slightest overcast conditions. Six-lines are very difficult to capture by hand unless they are located under an object on a cooler day. Their pointy nose and bright stripes give them a naturally sleek, fast appearance.

Legless lizards are common in the southern U.S. but they also occur here in the north. They are most easily mistaken for snakes. The **slender glass lizard** (*Ophisaurus attenuatus*) quickly retreats from any

Our only whiptail is the **six-lined-racerunner** (*Cnemidophorus sexlineatus*).

interaction with humans.



If caught, the tail will break off almost immediately as an escape measure. The sandy, grass, and prairie habitats of northwest Indiana give this limbless lizard a fair chance at escape from predators.

Legless lizards are successful burrowers, feeding on insects, spiders, snails, small snakes, and other lizards. This lizard may reach over 40 inches as a full grown adult.

We're not done yet. There's another species that isn't really considered a native Indiana lizard. Way down south along the Ohio River is a heavily fossilized area called, Falls of the Ohio State Park. Here, a European native has taken up residence. The **Common wall lizard** (*Podarcis muralis*) has been known in the Cincinnati area for decades but only recently has been found in Indiana. Indiana DNR has been trying to eradicate it but it prevails.

References: Minton S. (2001) Amphibians and Reptiles of Indiana
Conant/Collins 1991, Reptiles and Amphibians, Eastern/Central North America

KNIVES AND HERP ART

Photos & text by Roger Carter

This knife is named "Sidewinder" by the manufacturer and features a coiled up snake on the box and an image of the underside of a snake running the length of the box. Unfortunately the snake they are showing is a western diamondback rattlesnake. This was confirmed by my friend in Texas, Tim Cole. Thank you, Tim. At one end of the box is printed "CT643 PRODUCED UNDER LICENSE OF NEW COLT HOLDING CORP." and, on one side, "Visit allthingscolt.com for more of your favorite brand."

This is a slender knife nine inches long with the image of snake scales on the steel. One of the engineers that I work with examined this under an optical microscope that is run through his computer and the scale images seem to be laminated onto the steel. The back end of the knife has a lanyard wrapped around it seemingly to represent the rattle of a rattlesnake. The Colt logo is in the scale pattern on one side and, on the bare steel, is etched "CT643 CHINA". There is no identification on the packaging or the knife of what kind of steel this is but in a recent catalog that has this knife it says the steel is 440A stainless steel. The edge is sharp. There is a nice sheath made of a hard plastic.



Your HHS Board of Directors for 2015

PRESIDENT	Jim Horton	(317) 443-4845	stardali84@hotmail.com
VICE-PRESIDENT	Mary Hylton	(317) 966-4591	liblady81@hotmail.com
SECRETARY	Holly Carter	(317) 873-6561	drymarchonzz@hotmail.com
TREASURER/MEMBERSHIP	Roger Carter	(317) 873-6561	drymarchonzz@hotmail.com
SERGEANT AT ARMS	Will Brown	(765) 278-1480	wrbrown15@aol.com
EDITOR	Jim Horton	(317) 443.4845	Stardali84@hotmail.com
PROGRAM DIRECTOR	Ed Ferrer	(317) 787-7448	pythonpals1@msn.com
WAYS AND MEANS CHAIR	Angela Thomas	(317) 882-5266	necali@comcast.net
WEBSITE COORDINATOR	Barbara Filtri		webmaster@hoosierherpsoc.org
MEMBERS AT LARGE	Pat Hammond	(317) 656-9496	gnawbone92@yahoo.com
	Rick Marrs		rickmarrs@ymail.com
	Dale Schoentrup		eyelashviper@hotmail.com

The Hoosier Herpetological Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to the education of its membership and the conservation of all reptiles and amphibians. General monthly meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at Holliday Park Nature Center. Membership is open to all interested individuals. **No venomous animals are allowed at the General Meetings.**

2015 HERPETOLOGICAL EVENTS

June 17, 2015 – HHS Meeting, 7:00pm Holliday Park Auditorium. Topic – Show and Tell. All members are encouraged to bring anything herp related. Live animals, books, replicas, stories, etc.

July 5, 2015 - Indiana Reptile Expo in Noblesville, IN on the first Sunday of each month from 10 AM to 4 PM at the Hamilton County Exhibition Center & 4-H Grounds.

August 30, 2015 - Midwest Reptile Show, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Southwest Pavilion, Indiana State Fairgrounds, Indianapolis. \$5.00 admission, reptiles, amphibians, books, cages, feeder animals, and other supplies. Sell your herps and dry goods free of charge at our H.H.S. information booth (HHS members only) www.midwestreptile.com Other dates - October 18

September 12, 2015 – Live HHS animal show for the Handi-Capable Camp, Bradford Woods, Martinsville, IN

November 6 - 8, 2015 – 30th Midwest Herpetological Symposium, hosted by the Madison Area Herp Society. Held at the Monona Terrace, 1 John Nolen Dr, Madison, WI 53703. Hotel accommodations at the Hilton (9 E Wilson St, Madison, WI 53703) ph (608) 255-5100

MEMBERSHIP FORM

____ **New Member**

____ **Renewal**

____ **Name**

____ **Date**

____ **Address**

____ **City**

____ **State**

____ **Zip Code**

____ **Phone**

____ **Email Address**

____ **Individual/Family Membership \$20.00**

____ **Sustaining Membership \$25.00 or more**

____ **Herpetological Interest(s)**

Hoosier Herpetological Society
P.O. Box 40544
Indianapolis, Indiana, 46240-0544



Dated Material Enclosed

Address Correction Requested

____ If this area is checked, it's time to renew your membership!